

**ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE**

A tampon is provided having an applicator barrel adapted to house a pledget, and especially a radially expanding pledget, and receive a telescoping plunger that is adapted to expel the pledget from the barrel. The applicator barrel has a fingergrip area with at least one set of diametrically opposed, substantially flattened surfaces, convex surfaces, concave surfaces, or any combination thereof. These surfaces have at least one gripping structure to enhance the gripping characteristics of the applicator, allowing the user to securely hold the applicator during insertion and removal and during expulsion of the pledget from the barrel.